

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 03820 010735Z

11

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 065839

R 301537Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4746
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 3820

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, LE, SY

SUBJECT: SHIHABI REVIEWS LEBANESE NEGOTIAIONS

REF: AMMAN 6489

1. FOUND COS SHIHABI IN SEPT 29 MEETING VERY PESSIMISTIC

ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR PROLONGED CALM IN LEBANON. ASKED
HIM HOW HE COMPARED HIS AND KHADDAM'S EFFORTS IN HELPING
STOP FOURTH ROUND TO THEIR EARLIER TALKS OF LAST
JUNE/JULY. REPLIED THAT HE SAW NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE.
SYRIANS DISCOVERED THAT CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION THEY
HAD OPENED EARLIER IN SUMMER BETWEEN CONFLICTING LEBANESE

LEADERS HAD AGAIN BROKEN DOWN. THEIR PRINCIPAL EFFORT

WAS TO RESTORE THESE COMMUNICATIONS. HE FELT ESTABLISH-
MENT OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE WAS A USEFUL STEP,
BECAUSE IT BROUGHT TOGETHER SO WIDE A VARIETY OF POLITICAL
TENDENCIES, BUT OBVIOUSLY REGARDED IT AS THIN REED.

2. SHIHABI MADE CLEAR HE DID NOT SHARE KHADDAM'S VIEW,
EXPRESSED IN LATTER'S BEIRUT PRESS CONFERENCE, THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 03820 010735Z

LEBANESE TRAGEDY WAS RESULT
OF "BROADER PLAN" TO
HURT LEBANON AND PALESTINIANS IN ORDER DISTRACT ATTENTION
FROM SINAI ACCORD.

3. ASKED ABOUT TALK OF PARTITION IN LEBANON, SHIHABI
REPLIED IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS COMMON

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AMONG LEBANESE LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER,
EVERYONE OF
HIS CONTACTS FROM FAR RIGHT TO FAR LEFT AND OF ALL
RELIGIOUS CONFESSIONS DENIED HE ADVOCATED IT AS SOLUTION.

GENERAL OBSERVED SARDONICALLY, "LEBANON HAS LIVED OFF
ARAB INVESTMENTS AND TOURISM SINCE INDEPENDENCE.
THEY KNOW PARTITION WOULD ONLY HURT THEM FINANCIALLY."

4. RE PALESTINIAN ROLE IN FOURTH ROUND, SHIHABI SAID
THAT SAIQA HAD BROUGHT OVER BOTH ADDITIONAL MEN AND
EQUIPMENT BUT EMPHASIZED THESE HAD NEITHER BEEN IN LARGE
NUMBERS NOR AMOUNTS. SAID I UNDERSTOOD
PLA HAD PLAYED
ROLE IN HELPING TRANQUILIZE TRIPOLI SITUATION. TO MY
SURPRISE SHIHABI FLATLY DENIED THIS, SAYING THAT PLA
HAD PREPARED TO SEND UNITS INTO TRIPOLI AT REQUEST
OF GOL INCLUDING FRANGIEH. HOWEVER, AS UNITS
WERE ARRIVING AT SYRO-LEBANESE BORDER FRANGIEH SENT
PERSONAL MESSAGE COUNTERMANDING INVITATION. PLA UNITS
RETURNED TO BASE WITHOUT EVER CROSSING THE BORDER. ON
FOLLOWING DAY, AS SHIHABI RECALLED DEVELOPMENTS, LEBANESE
ARMY OCCUPIED POSITIONS BETWEEN ZGHORTA AND TRIPOLI.
PROJECTED MISSION OF PLA UNITS HAD BEEN TO OPERATE WITHIN
CITY OF TRIPOLI TO RESTORE ORDER AND PREVENT LOOTING.
VARIOUS PALESTINIAN UNITS FROM
CAMPS AROUND TRIPOLI DID PERFORM
THIS MISSION. (COMMENT: DATT TOLD BY GOOD SOURCE SEPT 29
PLA UNITS ACTUALLY CROSSED BORDER AND WERE ON LEBANESE SIDE FOR
SEVERAL HOURS.)

5. SHIHABI WAS RELUCTANT COMMENT ON HIS PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DAMASC 03820 010735Z

OF LEBANESE LEADERS BUT DID VOLUNTEER FOLLOWING EVALUATION OF
FRANRIEH: "A SIMPLE MAN WITH VERY LIMITED HORIZONS AND
NO VISION
OF HIS COUNTRY'S FUTURE. A MAN ABLE TO SPEAK
FOR PERHAPS HALF HIS OWN VILLAGE." IN PERSONAL POSTSCRIPT,
SHIHABI OBSERVED THAT WITH GREAT REGRET HE WAS
CANCELING LONGSTANDING PLANS FOR HIS ELDEST SON TO ENTER

AUB MEDICAL SCHOOL THIS YEAR AND REGISTERING HIM INSTEAD
AT DAMASCUS UNIVERSITY.

6. COMMENT: FOREGOING SUPPLEMENTS COMMENTS MADE BY
KING HUSSEIN TO AMBASSADOR PICKERING (REFTEL).
JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS WHO PARTICIPATED IN
SESSIONS WITH HUSSEIN, ASAD AND SHIHABI LAST WEEK ADDED
FOLLOWING FOOTNOTE. SHIHABI COMMENTED AT END OF HIS
BRIEFING THAT HIS MISSION HAD FAILED. ASAD AGREED WITH
SHIHABI BUT ADDED HE WAS SATISFIED THAT FAILURE WAS NOT
FROM LACK OF EFFORT ON PART OF SHIHABI AND KHADDAM BUT
RESULT OF GENERAL DEGENERATION IN LEBANESE POLITICAL SCENE.
MURPHY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DAMASC03820
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750340-0023
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975092/aaaaabig.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 AMMAN 6489
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 NOV 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHIHABI REVIEWS LEBANESE NEGOTIATIONS
TAGS: PINS, LE, SY, (SHIHABI, HIKMAT)
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006